

OXC 3638
Copy 6 of 6

22 June 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : OXCART Selection Evaluation

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REFERENCE : Memo for the Record [redacted] Dated 15 June 1962;
Same Subject

1. Such comments as I have on the referenced paper concern principally paragraph 5. This section deals with the controversial topic of interpretation of psychological and psychiatric assessments furnished by the School of Aviation Medicine or Lovelace Clinic for OXCART pilots.

a. I do not believe that it would be desirable to furnish SAM or Lovelace with a sufficient set of criteria to permit them to relate these pilots to the OXCART aircraft. The simple fact is that security would not permit it; therefore, we can expect to get continued psychological and psychiatric assessments made without benefit of the application of such useful criteria. The role of General Flickinger and [redacted] therefore, as interpreters of these tests in my view is well established.

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b. I believe the basic problem is that statements made in either the SAM or Lovelace examinations may be subject to later unfavorable interpretation unless they are adequately interpreted in writing by General Flickinger and [redacted] in their respective areas of competence. The fine line, as I see it, needs to be drawn between what is disqualifying in a basic sense as opposed to what might be interpreted as disqualifying after an unfortunate incident might have occurred. In principle, I share Colonel Beerli's view that we cannot fail to take account of interpretations which might be placed on psychological and psychiatric evaluations in the cold light of a post-mortem, and this would apply whether these evaluations were done by SAM and/or Lovelace or by General Flickinger and [redacted]. We need, I think, to be extremely

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discriminating in the language of the interpretations made by General Flickinger and [redacted] particularly in those instances where they appear on the surface to be grossly at odds with the findings of either SAM or Lovelace.

c. In the process referred to above, I think we should scrupulously avoid leaving out of our permanent records the reports as received originally from SAM or Lovelace, even though they might appear best left out in view of their content. I would not want to have a later charge made that we had suppressed medical data and information in order to have the verdict come out in a way which we might regard as favorable at the moment. I am certain that such suppression is not in the minds of either General Flickinger or [redacted]

[redacted] but we must be careful that administratively we keep the reports associated with each other in the file; i.e. the original report and the Flickinger/[redacted] evaluation. I believe also we should insist that in any case where the initial evaluation is strongly against recruitment for what may be described as major psychological and psychiatric deficiencies, the case be discussed with the Assistant Director for Special Activities before a final decision is made to acquire the services of the individual.

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2. As a matter of fact, the final decision for any candidate should be deferred until the additional assessments by [redacted] have been completed unless this drastically interferes with scheduling and/or signing up of pilot candidates.

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[redacted]
JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Acting Assistant Director
(Special Activities)
DD/R

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